

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MIND MAPPING IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' DESCRIPTIVE WRITING ABILITY AT COKROAMINOTO UNIVERSITY OF PALOPO

Juwita Crestiani

rorosuci.management@yahoo.com

Cokroaminoto Palopo University

Abstract

The objectives of this research were to find out whether or not mind mapping improves the students' descriptive writing ability covering content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics components; which aspects is dominantly improved by the effectiveness of mind mapping. This research applied quasi experimental method. This research consisted of assigned two groups namely experimental group and control group. Each group consisted of 30 students. The sample was chosen by purposive random sampling technique. The instrument of this research was writing test. In collecting data, this research used some procedures namely pre test, treatment, post test. In the experimental group, the students were given material through mind mapping for five times while in control group, the students were also given treatment through conventional way (lecturing method) for five times. The researcher used writing test both in experimental and control group. The data of students' writing ability were analyzed by using inferential statistics through SPSS 17.0 version. The effectiveness of mind mapping improved the students' writing ability in descriptive text. This is proved by the mean score of experimental group in posttest was 81.61 (good) classification. While the mean score of control group in posttest was 49.86 (poor) classifications. It was also proved by the different improvement of writing components (content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics) of both groups in the posttest which was taken from both valutors. Those improvements showed that effectiveness of mind mapping improved the students' writing ability in the experimental group. It is more effective to improve the students' writing ability. It indicated that the alternative hypothesis (H1) was significantly approved. Component in writing dominantly improved is content. The data result proves such conclusion which is based on the data from researcher and lecturer in the table 4.51 that showed that the mean score of content was 84.44 and it was higher than the other components.

Keywords: *descriptive, improving the students' writing ability, mind mapping*

Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan apakah atau tidak pemetaan pikiran dapat meningkatkan kemampuan menulis siswa yang meliputi isi, pengaturan, kosakata, penggunaan bahasa dan mekanisme; komponen mana yang paling dominan meningkat dengan keefektifan pemetaan pikiran. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode *quasi experimental*. Penelitian ini ditentukan oleh dua kelas yaitu kelas eksperimen dan kelas kontrol. Setiap kelas terdiri dari 30 siswa. Sampel dipilih dengan menggunakan *sample purposive*. Alat dari penelitian ini adalah tes tulis. Dalam pengumpulan data, peneliti menggunakan beberapa prosedur yaitu *pretest*, *treatment*, *posttest*. Pada kelas eksperimen, siswa diberikan materi melalui pemetaan pikiran selama lima kali sementara pada kelas kontrol juga diberikan pengajaran melalui cara konvensional (metode ceramah) selama lima kali. Peneliti menggunakan tes tulis pada kedua kelas eksperimen dan kontrol. Data dari kemampuan menulisnya siswa dianalisis dengan menggunakan statistik inferensial melalui program SPSS versi 17.0. Aplikasi pemetaan pikiran meningkatkan kemampuan menulisnya siswa pada teks deskriptif. Hal ini didukung oleh mean skor pada kelas eksperimen di *posttest* adalah 81.61 (baik) klasifikasi. Sementara mean score pada kelas kontrol di *posttest* adalah 49.86 (rendah) klasifikasi. Mean skor tersebut juga dibuktikan oleh peningkatan yang berbeda pada komponen menulis (isi, pengaturan, kosakata, penggunaan bahasa dan mekanisme) dari kedua kelompok dalam *posttest* yang diambil dari kedua penilai. Ini menunjukkan bahwa keefektifan pemetaan pikiran dapat meningkatkan kemampuan menulis siswa pada kelas eksperimen. Hal ini membuktikan bahwa pemetaan pikiran lebih efektif untuk meningkatkan kemampuan menulis siswa. Ini menunjukkan bahwa hipotesis alternatif signifikan diterima. Komponen menulis secara dominan meningkat adalah isi. Hasil data membuktikan kesimpulan yang didasarkan pada data dari peneliti dan dosen pada table 4.51 yang menunjukkan bahwa mean score pada isi adalah 84.44 dan ini lebih tinggi dari komponen lainnya.

Introduction

English is a means of crucial communication and occupies the first position in the world because it is used all over the world. In Indonesia, English is included as a foreign language and has been taught in the school, from kindergarten level till university level. Wello et.al. in Rahman (1999:3) added that English as a foreign language can be learned most effectively when it is used as the medium to convey informational content of interest and relevance to the learners. So, the mastery of English is not only needed in academic field but also in the science and technology field.

Writing is an activity that has relevance with idea in mind so can stimulate learning and critical thinking. English is not only can be communicated in oral. Good ability in writing is one of the crucial key to express message to reader. A writing can contains a lot of ideas. Through writing, students can share their knowledge and train them to express their ideas.

Good ability in writing is also very needed and has a lot of advantages for all people in the world because through writing, they can send information to the others. Therefore, we need the good ability in writing in order to the people can understand our writing. The ability to write only we can get if we write diligently and regularly.

Writing is assumed into the most difficult skill to be learned by the students because many aspects should be mastered such as grammatical and theoretical devices. There are some important parts in writing; some of them are kinds of writing style and some factors that can influence the students' ability in writing. Solahuddin (2009:157) stated that there are four kinds of writing namely narration, description, argumentation and exposition. They have different characteristics and strategies in doing them. While some factors that influence the students' ability are content, organization, vocabulary and mechanics.

Mastering in writing is not easy for the students who are learning English but must get attention from now. According to the result of observation that has been done at Cokroaminoto University of Palopo, the average score in writing still very poor. They are still very poor in writing because they feel that writing is difficult so they do not have motivation to write. They also have difficulty to acquire ideas and do not know how to express in writing form.

So far, English teacher has applied a number of strategies or methods to improve students' writing ability. But in fact, the students' writing ability still very poor. In this case, lecturer only uses lecturing strategy. Besides that, it caused by the limitation of media and the media make the student bored for learning process.

From the case above, the researcher is challenged to be more innovative and creative in choosing strategy or method that can make students interested and

enjoyable in writing. Mind mapping maybe can help the students to improve their writing ability.

Mind mapping combine left and right brain at the same time. By mind mapping, they do not just see the words but they also have to make the sentences which relate to the topic or core word through colored curve line, picture and symbol in each branch. So, it will help and encourage the students develop their ideas to write descriptive paragraph. But need to be proved by doing research which entitled “The Effectiveness of Mind Mapping in Improving Student’ Descriptive Writing Ability at Cokroaminoto University of Palopo”.

Referring to the previous explanation, the researcher is interested in conducting a research by using mind mapping.

Mind Mapping

According to Tony Buzan (2012:9) mind mapping is the easiest way to bring information get into the brain, and to bring information get out from the brain. Tony Buzan added that mind map use the ability of brain about visual introduction to get the big result by combining color, picture and curve branches. It will support and develop the ideas to make sentences.

a. Examples of mind mapping

The following are some example of mind mapping.



Figure 1: Mind Map “Buah” in Tony Buzan (2004:27)

b. Types of Mind Mapping

Indah in Suryani (2009:160) describes that mind mapping can be distinguished into four kinds, namely: network tree, event chain, cycle concept, and spider concept.

1) Network tree

The main ideas made in a quadrangle and other words written in the connection line. It is suitable for visualization (1) a cause an effect relation (2) a hierarchy (3) branch procedure and (4) technical terms which can be used to explain some correlation.

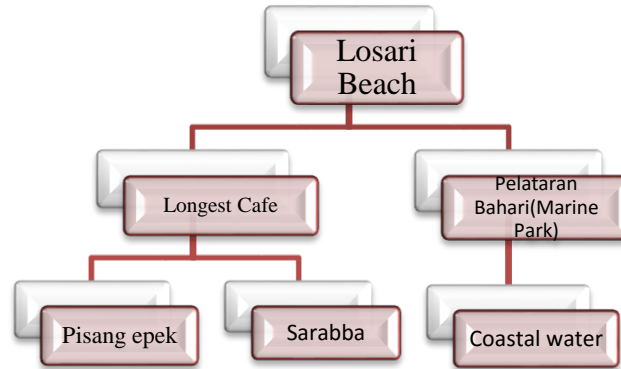


Figure 2: A Network Tree

2) Event chain

The event chain can be used for giving an accident order, steps in a procedure or steps in a process. It is suitable for visualization (1) some steps in a process (2) some steps in a linear procedure and (3) an accident order.

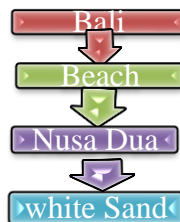


Figure 3: Event chain

3) Cycle event

In this concept map, the accident combination has no result. It is suitable to show a correlation how a combination accident is interacting to procedure a group of result repeatedly.

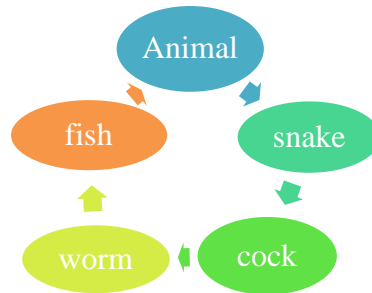


Figure 4: Cycle Event

4) Spider concept map

The spider concept can be used for sharing opinion from a central idea until get more various big ideas. It is suitable to visualization (1) something which is not based on hierarchy (2) a category which is not parallel and the result of sharing opinion.

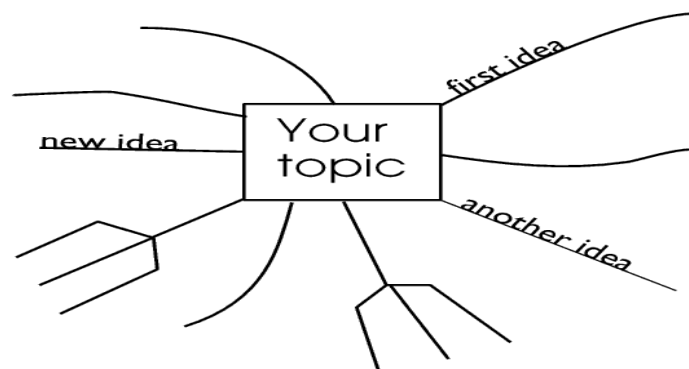


Figure 5: Spider Concept Map

Mind mapping is similar to a road makes study, work and thinking enjoyable, it can help to solve the lack of stock of students' vocabulary in memorizing some words which are related from universal word as a key word.

c. The Purpose of Mind Mapping

Taken from Tony Buzan in (<http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/DE/PD/instr/strats/mindmap/>) states that this strategy helps students quickly relate a central word or concept. The mind forms associations almost instantaneously and 'mapping' allows you to write your ideas quicker, using only words or phrases.

d. The Advantages of Mind Mapping

According Tony Buzan (2004: 10) that mind map can help us:

- 1) Become more creative
- 2) Efficient the time

- 3) Solve the problem
- 4) Can concentrate well
- 5) Passed the examination well
- 6) Memorizing well
- 7) Learning more fast and efficient
- 8) Learning more easily
- 9) Making plan
- 10) Communicate
- 11) Arrange and clear our mind

e. Tools of Mind Mapping

According Tony Buzan (2004: 10), the tools of mind map namely:

- 1) a blank piece of paper
- 2) colored pen or pencil
- 3) brain
- 4) imagination!

f. How to make a Mind Map

According Tony Buzan (2004: 21), there are seven steps to make mind map, namely:

- 1) Start from the center of a blank piece of paper which put in the horizontal position.
- 2) Use a picture for your central idea.
- 3) Use color to the whole mind map.
- 4) Connect the main branches to the central picture and connect the second and third level with the first level branch and so on.
- 5) Make the mind map's branches in curve line form not in straight line form.
- 6) Use one key word for each line.
- 7) Use picture in whole mind map.

Research Method

In this research, the researcher applied quasi experimental design (Gay et al. 2006:258). The population will be divided into two groups namely experimental group and control group. Experimental group was given treatment using mind mapping strategy and control group was given lecturing method. Both

groups were given the same pretest and posttest. Pretest was intended to find out the students' prior knowledge, while posttest was given to find out the students' writing ability after receiving treatment.

The population of this research was all of the fourth semester students of the English Education study program of Cokroaminoto University of Palopo in academic year 2013/2014. There were eight classes and there were 40 students for each class. So, the total populations were 320 students. Two classes represented for experimental and control group. Class A represents control group and class E represents experimental group. There were 30 students from each class was taken as sample.

The researcher calculated the mean score and standard deviation of the students' writing ability in covering content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics by using SPSS program version 17.0. The researcher also calculated the t-test value (at the significant level 0, 05) and t-table value to see the difference between pretest and posttest in a group. and ANOVA was used to know which of the five component is dominantly improved by the application of mind mapping.

To measure the students' writing ability, the researcher applied writing test in covering content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics.

Findings and Discussion

Based on the findings above, the writing ability of the fourth semester students of English department of Cokroaminoto University of Palopo improved especially for experimental group. It was also supported by the students' frequency and rate percentage of the students' pretest and posttest result from the researcher and the English lecturer of Cokroaminoto Palopo.

The data indicated that the two strategies were significantly different of the students' result in teaching writing by using mind mapping Even though both strategies can be used and influenced the students' writing ability but applying mind mapping was better effect than lecturing method.

1. The Students' Writing Achievement from the Researcher View.

It can be proven by the mean score of the students' pretest and posttest of experimental group. The mean score of pretest and posttest of experimental group

were 50.62 and 81.55 while the mean score of pretest and posttest of control group were 41.29 and 49.25. The data in the previous section showed that applying mind mapping in teaching writing especially descriptive text is more effective than lecturing method. It was also can be seen from the mean score in which the mean score of posttest of the experimental control group is very different. The mean score of posttest in experimental group, 81.55 was higher than that of the control group that was 49.25.

Based on the mean score of each writing component, the students' result also showed improvement. In the content of experimental group, the mean score of pretest was 57.16 and posttest was 83.66. It increased 26.5 points. It indicated that the mean score of students' writing ability on the content of writing components of experimental group in the posttest was significantly different than the pretest. While in the content of control group, the mean score of pretest was 44.80 and posttest was 48.53. It increased 3.73 points. It indicated that the mean score of students' writing ability on the content of writing components of control group in the posttest significantly different than pretest.

In the organization of experimental group, the mean score of pretest was 50.50 and posttest was 81.83. It increased 31.33 points. It indicated that the mean score of students' writing ability on the organization of writing components of experimental group in the posttest was significantly different than the pretest. While in the organization of control group, the mean score of pretest was 42.33 and posttest was 50.16. It increased 7.83 points. It indicated that the mean score of students' writing ability on the organization of writing components of control group in the posttest significantly different than pretest.

While, in the vocabulary of experimental group, the mean score of pretest was 51.66 and posttest was 81.33. It increased 29.67 points. It indicated that the mean score of students' writing ability on the vocabulary of writing components of experimental group in the posttest was significantly different than the pretest. While in the vocabulary of control group, the mean score of pretest was 43.00 and posttest was 49.66. It increased 6.66 points. It indicated that the mean score of students' writing ability on the vocabulary of writing components of control group in the posttest significantly different than pretest.

This data showed that the students' writing ability in both experimental and control group from pretest to posttest is better. However, the students' writing ability in experimental group was significantly improved than control group.

The result of data above is supported by Buzan (2004:6) says that mind mapping is the easiest way to bring information get into the brain and to bring information gets out from the brain. It indicates that mind mapping is creative and effective way to make note and will map our minds. So, there will a lot of ideas from the topic that can be developed.

Based on the students' pretest result either experimental or control group before and after treatment, the researcher analyze from the five components in writing. The lowest ability of both groups was in language use. In experimental group, the mean score of language use component in pretest was 43.20 and it was categorized "very poor" classification while in control group, the mean score of language use component in pretest was 29.46 and it was categorized "very poor" classification. It means that both of groups have the same difficulties in language use component. The students still cannot express their ideas by using language correctly.

After the students were given treatment, both of groups have significant progress in language use component. In experimental group, the mean score of language use component was 81.06 (good classification). It increased 37.86 points. While in control group, the mean score of language use was 44.53 (very poor classification). It increased 15.07 points. It means that the students' general ability in writing taught by using mind mapping is better than lecturing method. This data indicated that the students' writing ability in both experimental and control group improved. However, the students' writing ability in experimental group was still higher.

2. The Students' Writing Achievement from the Lecturer View.

It can be proven by the mean score of the students' pretest and posttest of experimental group. The mean score of pretest and posttest of experimental group were 48.46 and 81.67 while the mean score of pretest and posttest of control group were 43.51 and 50.48. The data in the previous section showed that applying mind mapping in teaching writing especially descriptive text is more

effective than lecturing method. It was also can be seen from the mean score in which the mean score of posttest of the experimental control group is very different. The mean score of posttest in experimental group, 81.67 was higher than that of the control group that was 50.48.

Based on the mean score of each writing component, the students' result also showed improvement. In the content of experimental group, the mean score of pretest was 55.56 and posttest was 85.33. It increased 29.77 points. It indicated that the mean score of students' writing ability on the content of writing components of experimental group in the posttest was significantly different than the pretest. While in the content of control group, the mean score of pretest was 49.06 and posttest was 52.33. It increased 3.27 points. It indicated that the mean score of students' writing ability on the content of writing components of control group in the posttest different than pretest.

These data above showed that the students' writing ability in both experimental and control group from pretest to posttest is better. However, the students' writing ability in experimental group was significantly improved than control group.

Based on the data of both groups from the researcher and the English lecturer of Cokroaminoto University of Palopo, the researcher found that the probability value of (0.00) was lower than 0.05 at the level of significance 0.05 and the degree of freedom was 58. In pretest, the experimental group acquired higher score, it was 49.54 while control group acquired 42.40 but in posttest of the experimental group acquired 81.61 while in control group acquired 49.86. Before the treatments, the researcher found that the ability of both groups was not the same, it is proved by the mean score of the control group was 42.40 and experimental group was 49.54 in pretest.

Even though the significance of the control group was also acceptable to be significant, but the range of the score of the experimental group was much higher than the control group. In which, the mean score of pretest of experimental group was 49.54 (poor) classification and the posttest was 81.61 (good) classification. While in pretest of control group was 42.40 (very poor) classifications and the posttest was 49.86 (poor) classifications. It means that

applying mind mapping can improve the students' writing ability in the experimental group. It is more effective to improve the students' writing ability. It indicated that the alternative hypothesis (H1) was significantly approved.

Component in writing dominantly improve is content. It is proven by combining from the data result of researcher and lecturer in the table 4.51 that showed that the mean score of content was 84.4 and it was higher than the other components.

Through mind mapping, the students have a lot of ideas from the topic that can be developed into sentences especially in content component. Their writing mostly relevant to topic and their ideas clearly stated. Besides that, they produce well organize, unified and completed sentence in content. It is agreed by the previous researcher, Shamma (2008) stated that the students were able to plan their idea effectively using the mind mapping and as results they produce well organize reports and there were also link between the ideas on their maps and their writing. So, it indicates that mind mapping is creative and effective way to make note and will map our minds.

Besides that, to determine which one of components (content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics) is dominantly improve by applying mind mapping, the researcher used ANOVA and based on the table 4.53 showed that the score of F-obs 11.65 was higher than F-table $11.65 > 2.43$. Thus, H1 was accepted and H0 was rejected. So, the five components (content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics) have different average score. And the data also showed that the statistics test $p = 0.000 < \alpha (0.05)$. It showed that there was a significant difference score among the five components of students' writing ability in experimental group or has different score.

Conclusion

The effectiveness of mind mapping improved the students' writing ability in descriptive text. This is proved by the mean score of experimental group in posttest was 81.61 (good) classification. While the mean score of control group in posttest was 49.86 (poor) classifications. It showed that applying mind mapping was more effective to improve the students' writing ability in five component (content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics). It indicated that

the alternative hypothesis (H1) was significantly approved. In addition, the effectiveness of mind mapping significantly improved the students' writing ability in term of content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics.

Suggestion

Based on the result of this research and conclusions above, the researcher gives some suggestions as follows:

1. In teaching writing especially descriptive text to the students, the English teacher should use an appropriate strategy which can create a good atmosphere and classroom situation to be fun so can make them relax and enjoy getting the material. One of the appropriate strategies is mind mapping.
2. For the students, who want to improve their writing ability especially in descriptive text, should use mind mapping strategy because mind mapping is creative and effective way to make note and will map our minds. So, there will a lot of ideas from the topic that can be developed. Furthermore, the students will not get bored for teaching and learning process because they not only use their left brain but also use their right brain at the same time. So, mind mapping combine left and right brain at the same time.
3. For the next researcher who wants to do the next research. The researcher hopes to conduct a research on the other skill.

References

- Adelstein. 1990. *The Writing Commitment*. New York: Harcourt Brace Javenovich.
- Andrzejczak, Nancy. From Image to Text: Using Images in the Writing Process. www.ijea.org/v6n12/v6n12.pdf retrieved on May 25, 2014.
- Al naqbi, Shamma. The Use of Mind mapping to Develop Writing Skills in United Arab Emirates (UAE). [marifa.htc.ac.ae/.../The-Use-of-Mind Mapping-to-Develop-Writing-Skill...](http://marifa.htc.ac.ae/.../The-Use-of-Mind-Mapping-to-Develop-Writing-Skill...) Retrieved on June 30, 2014.
- Aschawir Ali. 2009. *Using Series Pictures to Improve the Writing Skill of English Department Students of Letter Faculty of Indonesia Moslem University*. A Thesis of State University of Makassar.

- Abd.Rahman. 2010. *The Application of Collaborative Dictogloss Technique in Increasing The Students' Writing Skill*. A Thesis of State University of Makassar.
- Byrne, Donn. 1990. *Teaching Writing Skills* (Longman Handbooks for Language Teachers). Longman Group UK Limited.
- Buzan, Tony. 2004. *How to Mind Map*. Mind Map untuk Meningkatkan Kreativitas. Jakarta: PT Gramedia PustakaUtama
- . 2012. *Buku Pintar Mind Map*. Jakarta: PT GramediaPustakaUtama
- Caple, Linda. 1987. The Influence of Prior Knowledge on Writing, Conferencing and Revising. *The Elementary School Journal*. Vol. 88 No. 2 (1987) <http://www.jstor.org/pss>
- Donovan, Mellisa. 2012. Eight Characteristics of Good Writing. www.writingforward.com/better-writing/characteristics-of-good-writing. posted on January 12, 2012.
- Gay L. R., et al., 2006. *Educational Research Competencies for Analysis and Applications*: 8th Editions. Colombus Ohio. Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Hariyanti Thamrin. 2010. *Using Windows Movie Maker in Teaching Descriptive Writing at SMA Negeri 11 Makassar*. A Thesis of State University of Makassar.
- Heaton, J.B. 1975. *Writing English Language Test*. New York: Longman.
- Harmer, Jeremy. 1991. *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. London: Longman Group UK Limited.
- Hisasmaria. 2012. *Improving Students' Writing Skill of Narrative Text through Animation Movie*. A Thesis of State University of Makassar.
- Hairston, Maxine. 1986. *Contemporary Composition*. Boston: HoughtonMifflin Company.
- Hogue, Ann. 1996. *First Step in Academic Writing*. Longman
- Imran, Muhammad Chairil. 2011. *Improving Students' Writing Skill Through Clustering Technique*. A Thesis of State University of Makassar.
- Jacob, H.L. et.al. 1981. *Testing ESL Composition: A Practical Approach*. Massachusetts: Newbury House.

- Javed, Muhammad. A Study of Students' Assessment in Writing Skills of the English Language. files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED544075.pdf retrieved on May 25, 2014.
- Lindblom, Peter. 1983. *The Elements of Writing*. New York: Macmillan Publishing co., Inc.
- Nirwana Bidu. 1994. *The Ability to Produce Complex Sentences in Writing by Seventh Semester Students of English Department of FPBS IKIP UP*. Unpublished Thesis. Ujung Pandang: IKIP Ujung Pandang.
- Nirwana Bidu. 2010. *The Effectiveness of Using Journal in Improving Students' Ability to Write Description (quasi experimental study)*. A Thesis of State University of Makassar.
- Nunan, David. 1989. *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pollard, Lucy. 2008. Teaching English.e-book.
- Putu, I. 2014. Descriptive Paragraph. (online).[http:// bliputuinbali.blogspot.com/2010/11/descriptive-paragraph.html](http://bliputuinbali.blogspot.com/2010/11/descriptive-paragraph.html)[http:// bliputuinbali.blogspot.com/2010/11/descriptive- paragraph.html](http://bliputuinbali.blogspot.com/2010/11/descriptive-paragraph.html) retrieved on Februari 8, 2014.
- Riswanto. The Use of Mind Mapping Strategy in the Teaching of Writing at SMAN 3 Bengkulu, Indonesia.www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol_2_No_21_November_2012/8.pdf retrieved on May 25, 2014.
- Solahuddin, M. 2009. *Kiat-Kiat Cepat Belajar Writing*. Jogjakarta : DIVA Press
- Widodo, P.H. 2008. Process-Based Academic Essay Writing Instruction in An EFL Context. *Jurnal Bahasa dan Seni*, tahun 36 nomor 1 Februari 2008.
- Wang, Weiqing. The Role of Source Text Translation in a Simulated SummaryWriting Test: What Do Test Takers Say? <http://www.asian-efl-journal.com> retrieved on May 25, 2014.